Use Week of:

Unit 13 • Session 3

Elijah and Elisha

BIBLE PASSAGE:
2 Kings 2

STORY POINT:
God chose Elisha to continue Elijah's work as a prophet.

KEY PASSAGE:
Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:
How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

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LEADER Bible Study

Following God's great display of power at Mount Carmel, Elijah fled for his life and traveled to Mount Horeb where he encountered God in a soft whisper. God instructed Elijah to anoint a man named Elisha as his successor. Elijah found Elisha plowing a field. Elijah put his cloak over Elisha to show that Elisha would be a prophet like Elijah. Elisha followed Elijah and served him for many years. In time, King Ahab of Israel appointed his son Ahaziah as king. When Ahaziah died, his brother Joram became king.

Elijah's ministry came to an end, and God took him to heaven in an unusual way. First, Elijah and Elisha traveled from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho and then to the Jordan River. Elijah met with other prophets and their families. Despite Elijah's insistence otherwise, Elisha did not leave Elijah's side.

A group of prophets watched as Elijah parted the Jordan River by striking the water with his mantle (cloak) so he could cross. In Elijah's final moments, Elisha requested, "Please, let me inherit two shares of your spirit" (2 Kings 2:9). Elisha wanted power to continue God's work and confirmation as Israel's next prophet.

A chariot of fire and horses of fire suddenly appeared and separated the men. Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, and Elisha cried out after him. When Elijah was out of view, Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak and struck the water of the Jordan River. The water parted—a sign that Elisha had received power from God. Elisha would continue the work of Elijah as a prophet to Israel.

God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could carry out his mission as a prophet. Years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share the gospel with the world.

Elijah and Elisha

2 Kings 2

God told the prophet Elijah (ih LIGH juh) to find a man named Elisha (ih LIGH shuh). **Elisha would be a prophet to Israel after Elijah.** So **Elijah** obeyed God. He **found Elisha** plowing a field**, and Elisha followed Elijah and served him.**

When the time came for the Lord to take Elijah up to heaven, Elijah and Elisha traveled to Gilgal. At Gilgal, Elijah said, "Elisha, stay here. The LORD is sending me to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As long as you are alive, I will not leave you." So they went together to Bethel.

At Bethel, Elijah said, "Elisha, stay here. The LORD is sending me to Jericho." But Elisha said, "As long as you are alive, I will not leave you." So they went together to Jericho.

At Jericho, Elijah said, "Elisha, stay here. The LORD is sending me to the Jordan River." But Elisha said, "As long as you are alive, I will not leave you." So they went together to the Jordan River.

A crowd of prophets watched Elijah and Elisha as they stood by the river. **Elijah rolled up his cloak and hit the water with it. The river parted, and they crossed to the other side.**

Elijah asked, "Is there anything I can do for you before I go?"

Elisha said, "I want a double portion of the spirit that you have."

Elijah said, "If you see me go, you will have it."

Suddenly, a chariot of fire with horses of fire appeared and drove between them. Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Elisha watched as Elijah went away. Then he picked up Elijah's cloak and went back to the river. He hit the water, and it parted for him to cross to the other side just as it had for Elijah.

The crowd of prophets was there watching, and they saw that **the spirit that was with Elijah was now with Elisha.** The prophets searched for Elijah, but they could not find him since God had taken him up to heaven.

Christ Connection: God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could carry out his mission as a prophet. Years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share the gospel with the world.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use props:** Roll up a robe or long scarf to hold up when referencing Elijah's cloak.
- **Display art:** Show the Bible story picture as you tell the story. Point out Elijah and Elisha.

INTRODUCE the Story

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KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to discuss a time they had a friend who moved away. How did it feel?

SAY • Having a friend move away can be difficult and sad. It is common to fear you may never see your friend again. However, when friends who believe in Jesus move away, we can be 100 percent certain we will see them again. Today we will learn about a time Elijah went away; where might he have gone? We'll learn more soon!

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Looking Up" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Looking Up" activity page. Encourage kids to use the blank space provided to draw a picture of a person they look up to, like a parent, coach, or teacher.

SAY • Having someone to look up to is great. We can learn all kinds of things by listening to leaders. Today we will learn about a man who looked up to Elijah, and how God prepared that man to lead after Elijah.

Session starter (10 minutes)

LOW PREP

OPTION 1: Talents to teach

Invite each kid to brainstorm a talent that she has. Ask for volunteers to teach the rest of the group how to do whatever talent or skill they have come up with. Be prepared to help kids come up with talents and teach their talents to others.

SAY • Most talents and skills can be learned with good teachers and lots of practice, but today we will learn about a time God gave a man named Elisha special power just as God had given special power to Elijah. We'll talk more about that soon.

OPTION 2: Chariot race

- traffic cones, 4
- tape
- stopwatch (optional)

Set up four traffic cones to mark corners of a large square. Use tape to mark a starting line perpendicular to one side of the square. Form groups of three kids. Instruct each group to select one kid to be the "driver" and two kids to be "horses." Each group's driver will stand behind the two horses. The driver will place his left hand on the left horse's right shoulder, and his right hand on the right horse's left shoulder. Groups will take turns racing around the cones; the two kids in front should gallop, and the kid in back will run to stay caught up. You may use a stopwatch to see who can complete three laps with the fastest time.

SAY • What a fun game! In Bible times, chariots were a popular way to get around, especially for those who were wealthy or powerful. Today we will hear about a time Elijah rode in the back of an incredible kind of chariot. Where might a special chariot carry someone? We'll find out soon.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story

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Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire

[Leader enters wearing business formal attire.]

LEADER • Hello there, loyal viewers! It's time for your daily, Weather Wonderland forecast. My name is [*your name*] chief meteorologist here at KQXZ, where Known News is Good News.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

Thankfully, the record-breaking drought has recently ended with the downpour from a few days ago. Sadly, the huge amounts of rain have led to some unexpected flooding. The river has risen to historic highs and washed out the only bridge. No one is getting across any time soon, I'm afraid. But, the rain should let up by Tuesday, meaning we should see some water receding soon after. The city planners are already on the case and say the bridge should be rebuilt just a week or so after the rain stops. Until that time, please do not try to cross the river on your own! The waters look tamer than they

are. Remember, if you can't see how deep standing water is, assume it's deeper than you can cross!

You know, all this talk of crossing rivers has me thinking about a Bible story. In it, a man crosses a river twice without a bridge. I'll tell you all about it.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • As we talk about this story, I want each of you to pay close attention. See if you can find evidence to support what we've been learning about our big picture question and answer. ***How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.*** Let's find out how this story proves this is true.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. • Giant Timeline

LEADER • The Northern Kingdom of Israel was ruled by an evil king named Ahab. Because of Ahab's evil choices, God withheld rain for three years. During this time, **God provided in miraculous ways** for His prophet Elijah, as well as a widow and her son. When it was time for rain to fall again, **God showed that He is the one true God.** God completely burned up Elijah's altar when Baal's prophets couldn't even produce a spark. But Elijah's time as prophet was coming to an end, and God had plans to raise up a new prophet. Interestingly, the new prophet's name was pretty similar to Elijah's! Let's learn about it now. Our story is called "Elijah and Elisha."

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

- Bibles
- "Elijah and Elisha" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

Open your Bible to 2 Kings 2. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Elijah and Elisha."

LEADER • Wow! What a story. Elisha followed Elijah around and refused to leave him. When it was time for Elijah to go where Elisha couldn't follow, Elisha asked for a double portion of the spirit in Elijah!

Remember, Elijah is the prophet who, by the power of God in him, helped a widow make tons of bread from just a small amount of flour and oil. Elijah raised the widow's son from the dead and called down fire from heaven to prove God's power. Elisha basically said, "I want God to use me in incredible ways, just as He used you." That's a big request!

But God did just that. Elijah parted the Jordan on the way to the place where the chariots of fire took him into heaven. On the way back, what did Elisha do? He did the same thing! **God chose Elisha to continue Elijah's work as a prophet**. God's people were still living in sin, worshiping false gods. They still needed someone to lead them back to God.

But the One who would really lead them back to God was still many years away. You see, Jesus came to be the perfect Prophet. He told us God's message to people: He loves us and wants us to love and obey Him. Jesus perfectly showed who God is and what He is like because Jesus is God the Son.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could carry out his mission as a prophet.

Years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share the gospel with the world.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

- "Unit 13, Session 3" Questions from Kids video

Show the "Unit 13, Session 3" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about how we hear from God. Guide them to discuss how they can share God's Word with others.

Missions moment (3 minutes)

- "Hospital in Tanzania" printable
- Bible
- toy medical equipment

Show the picture of the hospital in Tanzania. Display a Bible beside some toy medical equipment. Ask kids to raise their hands and tell you which item they think is most important to the work of Dr. Larry Pepper.

LEADER • **God chose Elisha to continue Elijah's work as a prophet**. God chose Dr. Larry Pepper to continue His work in Africa and tell the people there about Him. Dr. Pepper does that by working through a hospital in Tanzania to make sick and hurting people well. He also tells them about Jesus, and that is most important. The Bible is the most important thing that Dr. Pepper uses to help people know Jesus.

Key passage (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- "I Am the Lord" song

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Isaiah 42:8. Then sing "I Am the Lord."

LEADER • ***How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.*** That's why God says so clearly that He will not share His glory or praise. We sinfully choose to worship many things, but only God deserves worship.

Sing (4 minutes)

- "Once and For All" song

LEADER • Let's sing to the one true God. He deserves our worship and praise. He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. That means we have a perfect sacrifice who covered all our sins, once and for all!

Sing together "Once and For All."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You for sending Jesus to save us. Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to fill believers with Your power so we can love You more and obey You each day. Help us trust You and worship You only. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story

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KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster

Invite volunteers to say the key passage from memory. Praise each kid's efforts and encourage kids to continue working on the key passage through the next week. Then lead the group in saying the verse while doing jumping jacks. As each word of the passage is spoken, kids should alternate back and forth stances of a standard jumping jack.

SAY • Great job with that key passage. Many of you have memorized the passage. Isaiah was a prophet of God. He wrote about God, explaining that God does not share His glory with others, or allow false gods to be praised. ***How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.***

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find 2 Kings 2. You may use the Old Testament Kingdoms map to show the Jordan River (*E6–I6*). Discuss how Bible divisions help us categorize and understand the different parts of the Bible. Ask for a volunteer to tell which division 2 Kings is in (*Old Testament History*) and what that division is about (*the history of God's people after entering the promised land*).

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

1. What cities did Elijah and Elisha travel together to? (*Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho; 2 Kings 2:1-4*)
2. How did Elijah and Elisha get across the Jordan river? (*Elijah, and later Elisha, parted the river by hitting it with Elijah's cloak; 2 Kings 2:8,14*)
3. What did Elisha ask for before Elijah went to heaven? (*a double portion of the spirit Elijah had, 2 Kings 2:9*)
4. Why did God use prophets? *Guide kids to understand that God used prophets to spread His Word and tell the people how to live. Help them see that the prophets called the people to love and obey God and wrote down God's words for His people. Help them see that we no longer have the same kind of prophets because the Bible is complete. The Bible contains all we need to know about God to love and trust Him.*
5. Whose power and spirit did Elisha really receive? *Discuss the source of Elijah's power. Remind the kids that the miracles Elijah performed happened by God's power. When Elisha received that power after Elijah, God was now working through Elisha as He had through Elijah.*
6. How can we have access to the power of Elijah and Elisha? *Help kids understand that when we trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives within us. He fills us with power and helps us love and obey God.*

SAY • **God chose Elisha to continue Elijah's work as a prophet**. God's people lived in sin, disobeying God and ignoring His law. They needed prophets to lead them back to God. Jesus is the perfect Prophet. He perfectly showed God's will for us.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

LOW PREP

- "Missions Event Planning Guide" printable
- cardboard boxes
- paper
- scissors
- markers or crayons
- freezer bags

OPTION 1: Mission project plans

Help the kids in your group make plans to collect supplies for simple medical kits. Use the "Missions Event Planning Guide" printable to walk kids through the steps needed to plan and execute a missions project. Ask for their ideas and record them on the guide. They can begin to decorate cardboard boxes to use as collection boxes.

Discuss with the kids ways to communicate the project to the rest of the church. Supplies for the kits should include: adhesive bandages, antibacterial wash/ointment, cotton balls/gauze pads, and Bible verses printed on strips of paper. After a few weeks spent collecting supplies, organize time for kids to assemble the supplies in freezer bags. Contact a local food bank or homeless shelter to figure out when you could deliver them.

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

SAY • We've been learning about Dr. Larry Pepper, a doctor who wants people to know Jesus and follow Him. He teaches people the gospel and trains others to continue God's work there. We don't have to travel to Tanzania to help people in need. We can be a part of work like that wherever we are.

- paper (optional)
- pencil (optional)

OPTION 2: Pick up and leave off

Instruct the kids to find partners. In each pair of kids, one kid will start the game by doing the first bit of a task, singing the first bit of a song, or drawing the first bit of a picture. After about 30 seconds, the partners will switch. The second kid will finish what the first kid started. Play multiple rounds, rotating partners and alternating who starts and who finishes. If necessary, provide the kids with guidance by telling them which song to sing, what to start

drawing, or what task to begin (such as tying a shoe). You may also wish to tell the kids when to switch.

SAY • **God chose Elisha to continue Elijah's work as a prophet.** Elisha spent some time following Elijah and learning from him, and when the time came, Elijah was taken into heaven. Elisha was ready to take over as God's messenger because of the power God gave him and the time he spent learning from Elijah.

We can share the gospel with others and teach them what it looks like to love and obey God. Someday, we will all grow old and pass away; but through sharing the gospel and leading others to love and obey God, the legacy of church will carry on.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

- pencils and crayons
- paper
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.